

Chapter 1225 Parting On Bad Terms

Shortly after, two doctors called separately by Jorge and Jimmie arrived. After examining Loraine's and Keely's injuries, the doctors confirmed there were no major issues, thanks to the initial treatment. They offered some advice and then departed.

Everyone gathered around the table, facing the delicious spread, but an uneasy silence hung in the air.

Even the most appetizing dishes seemed unappealing after the recent events.

Marco, his expression stern, stood up.

Loraine had been unfairly treated, yet she still had to apologize to Jorge. Although Marco hadn't voiced his dissatisfaction, he had made a decision—he and Loraine wouldn't visit here again.

The meal didn't need to continue.

Sensing his resolve, Loraine subtly tugged at his shirt, her face calm and her eyes urging him not to let this misunderstanding strain their relationship.

Marco clenched his fists in silence, brows furrowed, while Loraine took charge to break the tension. "Alright, let's dig in before the food gets cold."

Seeing Loraine's intent to stay, Jennie decided to lighten the mood. She eagerly picked up a favorite dish and exclaimed, "Lorrie put so much effort into this meal. It would be a shame

to waste it. Let's eat!"

Gradually, the atmosphere thawed, and soon everyone was praising the meal.

Witnessing this, Keely's mouth twitched momentarily, and then she put on a petulant expression. She took a bite of food, spat it out, and pushed her plate away, whining to Jorge, "I don't want this. Give me something else!"

Jorge smiled and urged Keely to sample more dishes, but she continued to take only one bite of each before spitting them out, wasting a significant amount of food.

The others chose to ignore her antics, but her hyperactive behavior made it difficult for everyone to enjoy the meal.

Loraine, seated next to her, was especially affected. Each time she tried to eat something, Keely would snatch it away, leaving Loraine with barely anything to eat.

Loraine frowned slightly, wondering if Keely's actions were deliberate and targeted at her or if she was simply behaving like a child.

Seeing Loraine's frown, Keely immediately adopted a scared and submissive demeanor, creating a tense atmosphere once more.

Marco's patience wore thin. Regardless of whether Keely was genuinely suffering from mental illness, he couldn't tolerate anyone mistreating Loraine.

He glanced at Jorge, who had witnessed everything. While Jorge understood that Keely's behavior stemmed from her condition, he knew it was inappropriate, especially in front of guests. He signaled for a servant to discreetly escort Keely away from the table.

After Keely had been taken away, Jorge noticed a frown on Loraine's face. He grumbled, "Keely's condition makes her act like this... She wouldn't behave so unruly if she were well. Please understand, Loraine." He looked at her with displeasure. "You know Keely's situation better than anyone. Let's not upset her further."

Loraine remained composed, silently setting down her utensils.

She realized that no matter how much Keely's condition deteriorated, it wouldn't erase the harm she caused.

Keely could still upset her now.

Just as Jennie had defended her, Loraine had cooked for everyone out of respect for Marco and their friends present.

She was the CEO of the Universe Group, not Jorge's servant! Was she not even allowed to frown?

Loraine found it ironic. While she valued Marco's friendship with Jorge, she would never compromise her dignity for anyone.

She had once compromised her dignity for Marco, and what had it earned her? Divorce.

With a graceful smile, Loraine rose from her seat and inclined her head slightly. "Mr. Riley, I have work to attend to. I won't disturb your gathering any longer. Excuse me."

Seeing this, Jennie glanced at Jimmie and silently followed Loraine.

The men left at the table were stunned, exchanging uncomfortable glances. How had a delightful meal taken such a bitter turn?

Marco gave Jorge a meaningful look but said nothing as he too left.

Jimmie sighed, grabbed his coat, and smiled sadly. "Jorge, perhaps we should see each other less frequently."

Jorge frowned, glancing in the direction Marco had gone, and huffed, "Why? Is Marco really going to abandon our friendship over a woman? We've known each other longer than they've been together!"



Chapter 1226 A Shift In Their Friendship

Jimmie pursed his lips and turned to look at Marco, who was chasing after Loraine. Jorge's inquiry left him feeling sad.

Things had shifted significantly. It had been many years, and Jorge remained oblivious to what had transpired.

He had not been part of any of it; therefore, explanations were futile.

Sometimes, the length of a friendship doesn't define its strength. Jimmie still saw Jorge as his buddy and believed Marco shared this sentiment. Yet, he did not agree with Jorge's words.

Recalling the glance Jennie gave him before going after Loraine, Jimmie found himself momentarily lost in thought. When he snapped out of his reverie, he faced Jorge and said calmly, "Perhaps Loraine was at fault today, but you know what? The blame lies with you."

Jorge looked stunned, then responded angrily, "What did I do? I merely spoke the truth! Jimmie, how could you..."

Jimmie replied with a meaningful tone, "You know, whenever I claim I'm telling the truth, it usually means I'm picking a side."

His tone then became serious. "You blamed Loraine for not looking after the sick Keely. Why didn't you blame yourself? You were the one who let Keely into the kitchen, weren't you?"

Jorge found himself at a loss for words.

In debates, he could never outmatch Jimmie. He found Jimmie's arguments logical yet remained unconvinced. Clearly, Keely's injuries were severe.

The indifference in Marco's eyes as he walked away left Jorge feeling disappointed. He pursed his lips and murmured, "I've faced life and death with Marco. Am I not as important as Loraine to him?"

Jimmie, usually so articulate, found himself at a loss for words.

He had not been involved in the gunfight; however, Marco's harrowing tales had painted a vivid picture of the danger and fear.

It was indisputable—Jorge had saved Marco's life.

At that moment, a message arrived. Jimmie checked his phone, sighed, and shook his head. "We're still friends. Maybe in the future, it'll be just Marco and me asking you out. We'll keep Loraine and Keely out of it," he said somberly.

Jorge was slightly stunned, wondering what kind of past events had caused Marco to distance himself from Keely.

Jimmie walked over and clapped him on the shoulder. "Look, Jorge, we're buddies, and Marco remembers your bravery. But you have to understand, Loraine is more important than his own life. He's going to be with her forever. If you want to remain his friend, don't make it difficult for him."

After delivering his advice, Jimmie turned and walked away. In a daze, Jorge moved towards the door just in time to see Marco catching up with Loraine. Nearby, Jennie playfully scolded Jimmie by tugging at his ear, yet he raised no objections.

Things had indeed changed. With Marco now deeply involved with someone he loved, Jorge sensed a shift in their friendship.

After a near-death experience, Jorge had missed several years with his friends and was unsure how to reconnect with them amidst all these changes.

Luckily, he still had Keely.

This thought brought a smile to his face. He turned back to search for Keely and found her already outside, quietly observing her surroundings.

When their eyes met, her expression swiftly turned sorrowful. She pouted and lamented, "Jorge, I was so lonely eating alone! You hate me, don't you?"

Jorge hadn't noticed the change in her expression, but her words resonated deeply with him, inadvertently leading him to blame Loraine.

"If only Loraine had been more considerate, this dinner could have ended perfectly!" he thought, frustrated by the unnecessary complications.

Suddenly, he realized how much more obedient and sensible Keely was. An occasional tantrum? Hardly a problem.

He stepped forward, took Keely's hand, and said gently, "No, of course not. It's their fault. Out of everyone, you're the one person I could never hate."

Meanwhile, Marco finally caught up with Loraine. Her calm expression made him slightly nervous.

She opened the car door and was about to sit in the driver's seat, seemingly oblivious to his presence.

He quickly grasped her hand and said gallantly, "Loraine, thank you for today. Let me drive."